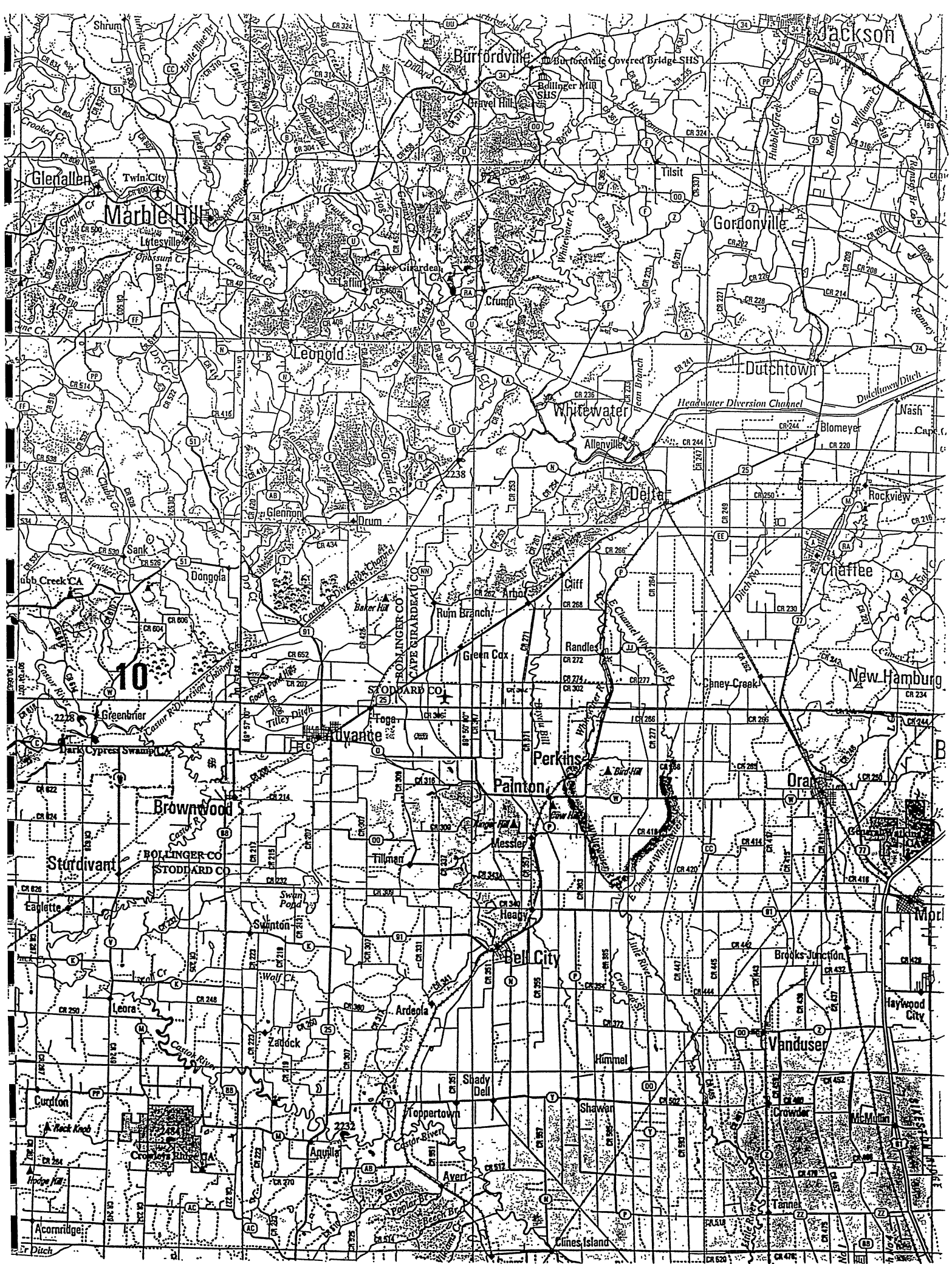


# **Missouri Board on Geographic Names**

November 9, 2000

**West Fork/Branch, Whitewater Creek**

**East Fork/Branch, Whitewater Creek**





November 9, 2000

Please find attached supporting materials related to the nomenclature issue of:

## West Fork/Branch of Whitewater Creek

## East Fork/Branch of Whitewater Creek

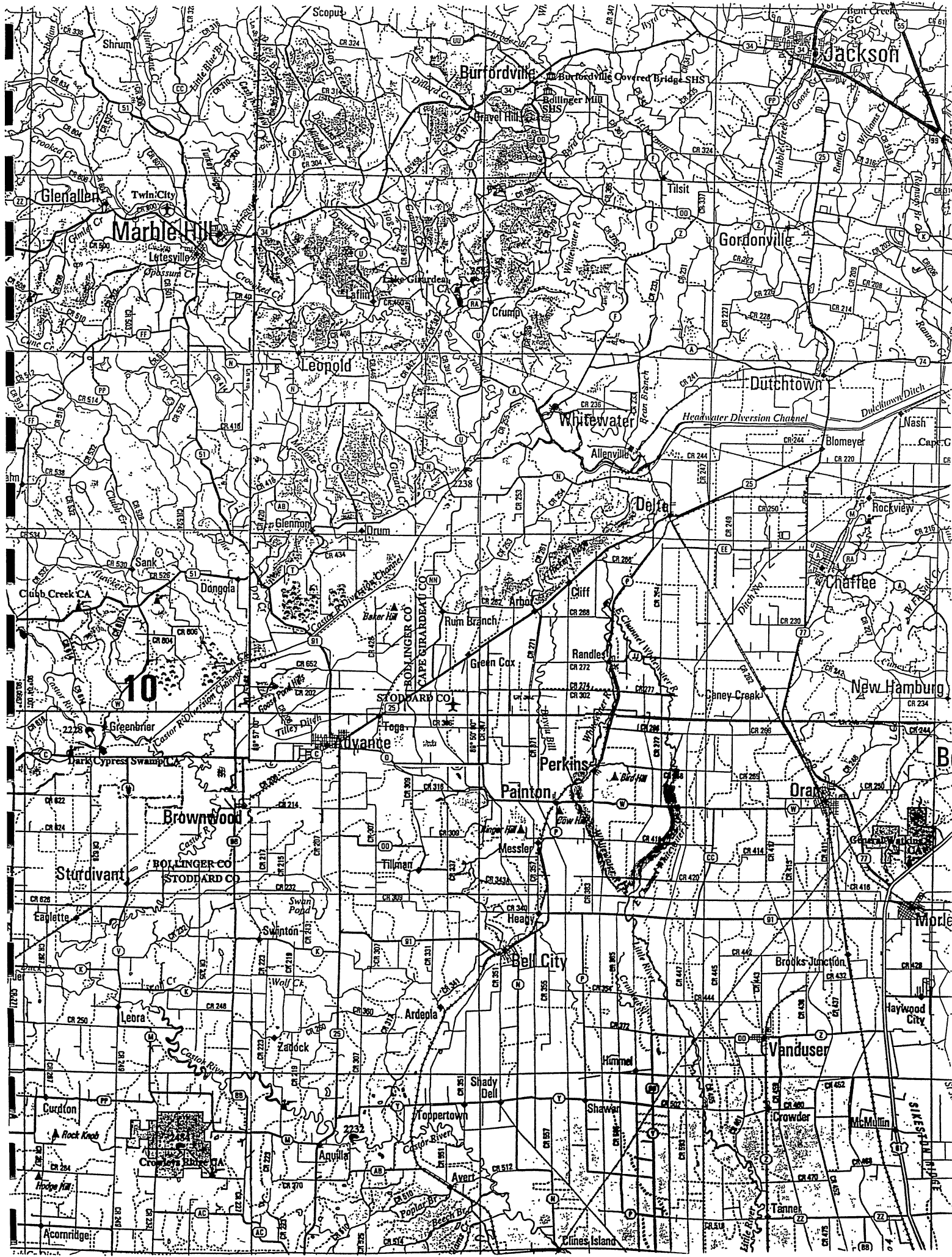
Sincerely,

Dr. Frank Nickell, Director  
Ms. Diana Steele, Research Assistant

**Center for Regional History  
Southeast Missouri State University  
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701**

## **Table of Contents**

1. Cover Page.
2. Map of affected waterways, East and West Fork/Branch of the Whitewater Creek.
3. Names Issue Worksheet.
4. Bibliography
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  - a) Letter From Mr. Larry Dowdy, Little River Drainage District. *(See behind apricot colored paper).*
  - b) Historical Maps. *(See behind blue colored paper).*
  - c) Photographs.
    1. Whitewater Creek and Bifurcation.  
*(See behind yellow paper).*
    2. East Fork/Branch Whitewater Creek.  
*(See behind green paper).*
    3. West Fork/Branch Whitewater Creek.  
*(See behind pink paper).*
    4. Convergence of East and West Fork/Branch and the Headwaters of the Little River.  
*(See behind tan paper).*



**Missouri Board On Geographic Names  
Name Issue Worksheet  
9 November 2000**

**NAME ISSUE:** Name evaluation for the east and west waterways of the Whitewater Creek.

**PROPOSAL:**

Submitted by: Dr. Frank Nickell, Director, Center for Regional History, Southeast Missouri State University, One University Plaza, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 63701.

Received from: Dr. Frank Nickell, Director, Center for Regional History, Southeast Missouri State University, One University Plaza, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 63701.

**DATE:**

Submitted: 9 October 2000

Received: 10 October 2000

\_\_\_\_\_ Begins in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri Township 29 N Range 12 E  
Ends in Stoddard County, Missouri, Township 29 Range 11 E.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The Whitewater Creek, which was discussed at great length during the last MoBGN meeting on 26 September 2000, bifurcates 1.6 miles north of Randles, Missouri creating an east and west waterway to the Whitewater Creek at Township 29 N Range 12 E.

The east waterway moves southeasterly through Township 29 Range E then alters its course southwesterly to a point where it merges with the west waterway. Most of this watercourse is currently unremarkable except from aerial perspectives. The original channel is dissected multiple times by ditches formed by the Little River Drainage District. The volume of water in this waterway is formed by irrigation run-off and occasional flash flooding. The merger of the two waterways occurs approximately 3.6 miles south of Painton, Missouri to create the Little River. The entire length of the east channel is approximately 6.4 miles long.

The west waterway continues southwesterly and serves as the Scott and Stoddard County boundary. It flows southwesterly near the town of Randles, paralleling both a railroad line and state Highway P. Near the town of Perkins the waterway turns southeasterly until it merges

with the east waterway and the headwaters of the Little River. The entire length of the western waterway is approximately 7.2 miles long. One of the distinguishing landmarks between these two watercourses is a promontory and locale known as Bird Hill. At the widest point the east and west forks are three miles apart. At a point 3.6 miles south of Painton, the two waterways converge into a LRDD ditch which becomes the headwaters of the Little River. From this point the water either evaporates or is carried by the LRDD into the Mississippi River near Helena, Arkansas.

#### **GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:**

County: The bifurcation of the Whitewater Creek begins in southern Cape Girardeau County and ends at the headwaters to the Little River in Stoddard County, Missouri.

Communities Involved: Randles, Perkins, and the locale of Bird Hill.

Forest & Parks: None.

#### **GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION:**

Whitewater Creek bifurcates 1.6 miles north of Randles, Missouri where it creates an east and west watercourse. Both waterways are fed from agricultural irrigation and rain-water runoff. The west waterway is somewhat deeper and more easily seen by ground and air than the east waterway. During the dry summer months there may be one to three feet of pooled water in the channel, frequently covered with algae and duckweed. The east watercourse literally vanishes at times, absorbed into parts of the Little River Drainage District. This waterway is generally dry except for small pools formed behind sparse vegetation and random tree growth. From the air the original watercourse is clearly seen despite having its main water supply diverted for nearly a century by the LRDD.

#### **OTHER NOMENCLATURE:**

Also known as the Eastern Branch of the Whitewater, Eastern Channel, Eastern Channel of the Whitewater, Eastern Branch of the Whitewater River, Eastern Channel of the Whitewater River, and East Fork of the Whitewater, or "the Floodway;"

Western Branch of the Whitewater, Western Channel, Western Channel of the Whitewater, Western Branch of the Whitewater River, Western Channel of the Whitewater River, "the Ditch," and West Fork of the Whitewater.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

The two waterways associated with the Whitewater Creek south of the Headwaters Diversion Channel have had many name designations. The earliest documentation refers to the two branches as "forks" with an identification of east and west. The west waterway serves as the boundary between Scott and Stoddard counties in Missouri. Local usage varies between the terms of "ditch, slew, floodway, and creek" with no identification of the name Whitewater.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Based upon historical precedent and for the purposes of standardizing the nomenclature it is hereby recommended that:

1. The most appropriate designation for the western waterway of Whitewater Creek be **"West Fork of Whitewater Creek;"**
- 2 The most appropriate designation for the eastern waterway of Whitewater Creek be **"East Fork of Whitewater Creek."**

## **SOURCES:**

**Cape Girardeau, Geological Survey**, Missouri-Illinois-Kentucky, 1:100,000-scale metric topographic map, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1986, 37089-A1-TM-100.

**Paducah, Geological Survey, Kentucky-Illinois-Missouri-Indiana**, 1:250,000-scale metric topographic map, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1987, 37088-A1-TM-250.

**Rolla, Geological Survey, Missouri-Illinois**, 1:250,000-scale metric topographic map, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1989, 37090-A1-TM-250.

**Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission: Future Land Use Plan**, 4 September 1986, exhibit #71.

**Missouri Atlas & Gazetteer**, Yarmouth, Maine. Delorme, 1998.

Houck, Louis. **A History of Missouri: From the Earliest Explorations and Settlements Until The Admission Of The State Into The Union**, 1908 R.R. Donnelly & Sons Company, Chicago. Volume 1.

Jackson, Donald, editor. **Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents 1783-1854**. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1962.

**Plan For Drainage**, The Little River Drainage District, 1907.

**Plan For Drainage Map**, The Little River Drainage District, circa 1910.

**Topographical Maps for the Little River Drainage District**, 1924.

**Index Map Of The Little River Drainage District And Adjacent Territory,**  
by Isaac A. Smith, Del. Sheet 1, August 1926. Drawing Number 1665,  
Index 107.32, File K-3.

**Missouri: Official Highway Map 1999-2000,** Missouri Department of  
Transportation.

**Goodspeeds History of Southeast Missouri,** 1888.

Douglass, Robert Sidney. **History of Southeast Missouri,** 1912.

Houck, Louis **A History of Missouri; From The Earliest Explorations And  
Settlements Until The Admission Of The State Into The Union,**  
R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, Chicago, 1908.

Shrum, Edison. **The History of Scott County, History: Up To The Year  
1880,** Scott County Historical Society.

Jackson, Donald, editor. **Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with  
Related Documents 1783-1854,** University of Illinois Press, Urbana. 1962.

**Missouri Atlas & Gazetteer.** Yarmouth, Maine. DeLorme, 1998.

**Indirect Deed Index, Book 1. Book 1, pages 147 & 148.** Recorder of  
Deeds Office, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri.

**Indirect Deed Index, Book 1. Page 434.** Recorder of Deeds Office, Cape  
Girardeau, County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri.

**Survey of Township 29, Range 11,** Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County  
Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, Jenifer Sprigg. September, 1826.

**Survey Map of Township 29, Range 12.** Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau  
County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, Silas Reed. August 26,  
1842.

**Survey of Township 31, Range 11, Sections 26 & 25,** Mapping Division,  
Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. April 25, 1844.

**Survey of Township 30, Range 11,** Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County  
Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, M. Lewis Clark, Surveyor  
General. December, 1852.

**Survey of Township 32, Range 11,** Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County  
Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor M. Lewis Clark, Surveyor General.  
December, 1852.

**Cape Girardeau County Range and Township Map of 1966.**

**Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission: Future Land Use  
Plan,**

September 4, 1986, exhibit #71.

**River Classifications,** U.S. Government, Department of the Interior, Bureau of  
Land Management, 1998.

**Oxford English Dictionary,** Second Edition, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989.

**1861 Major Operations of Grant's Command, in Late 1861.**

**1863 Marmaduke's Expedition to Cape Girardeau.**

**1880 Rand, McNally & Company's Indexed Atlas Of The World.**

**1924 Little River Drainage District Topographical Maps.**

**1926 Index Map Of The Little River Drainage District and Adjacent Territory.**

**1964 Topography Map.** Missouri State Highway Department.

Cape Girardeau County, Missouri:

Personal Interviews.

Indirect to Direct Land Transfers, Recorder of Deeds, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri, 63755.

Surveyor Map, 25 April 1844, Twp 31 & Range 11.

Surveyor Map, 30 December 1852, Twp 32 & Range 11.

Surveyor Map, 24 May 1852, Twp 31 & Range 11.

Surveyor Map, 30 December 1852, Twp 30 & Range 11.

County Range & Township Map, 1966.

Photographs.

Scott County, Missouri:

Personal Interviews.

Survey Map, 25 August 1842, Township 29 & Range 12.

Photographs.

Stoddard County, Missouri:

Personal Interviews.

Survey Map, 2 September 1826, Township 29 & Range 11.

Photographs.

# Appendices:

Documents pertaining to the last meeting of the MOBGN  
held 26 September 2000, St. Louis, Missouri.

**Missouri Board On Geographic Names  
Name Issue Worksheet  
26 September 2000**

**NAME ISSUE:** Name evaluation for the "Whitewater River" vs. "Whitewater Creek."

**PROPOSAL:**

Submitted by: Dr. Frank Nickell, Director, Center For Regional History, Southeast  
Missouri State University, One University Plaza, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 63701.  
Received from: Dr. Frank Nickell, Director, Center For Regional History, Southeast  
Missouri State University, One University Plaza, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 63701.

**DATE:**

Submitted: 22 August 2000  
Received: 23 August 2000  
Begins in St. Francois County, Missouri, Twp 34 N Range 8 E.  
Ends in Stoddard County, Missouri, Twp 29 N Range 11 E.  
Revised: 18 September 2000

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

Begins in St. Francois County, Missouri, Twp 34 N Range 8 E.  
Ends in Stoddard County, Missouri, Twp 29 N Range 11 E.  
The headwaters of the "Whitewater" are spring-fed or rainwater tributaries located in St. Francois County, Missouri at Township 34 N and Range 8 E. This waterway travels southeast into Perry County, Missouri at Township 34 N Range 8E, then continues southeast into Bollinger County, near Sedgewickville, Missouri, at Township 33 N Ranges 9, 10, & 11 E . The "Whitewater" enters Cape Girardeau County, Missouri at Township 33 N Range 11 E and travels due south through Township 32 Range 11 E. The waterway continues due south to Township 30 N Range 11 E where it is dissected by the Headwaters Diversion Channel of the Little River Drainage District. Immediately south of the Headwaters Diversion Channel the watercourse continues south where it bifurcates 1.6 miles north of Randles, Missouri to create an eastern and western channel. Both of these channels flow south through Township 29 North R 11 E with the western creating the county line between Scott and Stoddard counties, Missouri. At approximately 3.6 miles south of Painton, Missouri they converge to create the Little River in Township 29 N Range 11 E in Stoddard County, Missouri.

### **GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:**

County: St. Francois, Perry, Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Scott and Stoddard.

Begins in St. Francois County, Missouri in Township 34 N Range 8E and ends in Stoddard County, Missouri Township 29 N Range 11 E.

Communities Involved: The locale of Thompson Holler, and communities of Yount, Alliance, Sedgewickville, Millersville, Burfordville, Whitewater, Allenville, Delta, Randles and Perkins, Missouri.

Forest & Parks: Mark Twain National Forest, Clark National Forest, Lake Girardeau Conservation Area, Burfordville State Historic Site.

### **GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The Whitewater begins in an area of rolling hills in St. Francois county, north and east of Fredericktown, Missouri. It begins as scattered rain water run-off, falling through ravines and valleys from an elevation of 1316 and 1394 feet above sea level. As these high-land tributaries converge, the waterway evolves into a narrow course with a gravel, rock, or sand base. At various points heavy rain run-off has created holes which frequently reach a depth of eight to ten feet, popular with residents for fishing and swimming. By the time the waterway widens and empties into the Diversion Channel and the Little River in Stoddard County it has fallen approximately six hundred feet.

### **OTHER NOMENCLATURE:**

Also known as Old River, Old Whitewater, White Water, White Water River, Whitewater River, Big Whitewater, Big Whitewater River, Whitewater Creek, White Water Creek, Big White Water Creek, East & West Branch of the White Water, Eastern and Western Channels of the White Water, Whitewater River Ditch, The Ditch, and (Whitewater) Brook.

### **CONCLUSIONS:**

The waterway in southeast Missouri commonly referred to as "the Whitewater" has had many name designations. From the territorial period through the Civil War era common usage labeled this as "White Water Creek," with its main tributary identified as the Little White Water Creek. The designation of the "Whitewater" has generally been continued to this day with a tendency to **not** refer to the suffix of either creek or river. Available land records indicate that

from the early nineteenth century into the twentieth century the main stem of the watercourse was identified as "White Water Creek."

At the beginning of the twentieth century there was an increased interest in the drainage of the giant wetlands of southeast Missouri. This led to the 1907 formation of the Little River Drainage District. For nearly a century the LRDD has ditched, drained, and converted nearly two million acres of southeast Missouri wetland into prime agricultural land, some of the most productive in the nation. In this century-long process the LRDD has consistently referred to the Whitewater as the "Whitewater River."

Also early in the century the formation of the state highway system and a land survey system brought non-local surveyors to the region, adding to the diversity of terminology of roads, bridges, and waterways. Other factors which contributed to this diversity include the formation of a strong and independent county government system; a rapid population growth between 1910 and 1930; and a substantial number of stable land owners.

At the present time local usage north of Highway 72 and south of the Diversion Channel tends toward the term, "Whitewater Creek." Between Highway 72 and the Diversion Channel the watercourse is generally referred to as the "Whitewater River." This seems due to the fact that the hills north of Highway 72 are more pronounced with run-off from small springs and occasional heavy rains. South of Highway 72 the terrain is more level and the course wider with a capacity for a greater volume of water. Residents of the communities Whitewater and Allenville generally designate this the "Whitewater River" as they are occasionally isolated by bottomland flooding. Those who live between the Diversion Channel and the Whitewater's convergence with the Little River consistently identify it as a creek.

When the Diversion Channel was created the Whitewater essentially became two waterways, most accurately labeled, "upper," and "lower." These are, for all purposes, two separate watercourses. A vivid illustration of that occurred in the flood of 1993 when the "upper" Whitewater was at such a high level that the communities of Whitewater and Allenville were isolated, the latter community for several weeks. At the very same time the "lower" Whitewater, a few feet across the Diversion Channel, was in a condition of drought. Irrigation units south of the Diversion Channel were distributing water within a few feet of the flooded channel, in some cases spraying into flooded waterways.

The "upper" Whitewater is essentially made up of high-land spring and rainfall run-off, often moving at high velocity. This water empties into the Diversion Channel and is moved into the Mississippi River south of Cape Girardeau.

The "lower" Whitewater is comprised of low-land run-off from rain or irrigation water. Approximately one and one-half miles north of the community of Randles this watercourse bifurcates into eastern and western channels. At a point 3.6 miles south of Painton, the two channels converge into Ditch 34 of the Little River Drainage District and the water either evaporates or is carried into the Mississippi near Helena, Arkansas.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Based upon historical precedent and for purposes of standardizing the nomenclature it is hereby recommended that:

1. the most appropriate designation of this watercourse should be, "Whitewater Creek."
- 2 there should be a designation of "**upper**" and "**lower**" Whitewater for (a) the portion of the watercourse above the Diversion Channel, and (b) the portion of the watercourse below the Diversion Channel.

## **SOURCES:**

**Dept. of Geology & Land Survey**, 111 Fairgrounds Road, Rolla, Missouri, 65401. Volume 217, pages 79, 80, 81 and 93, February 1818. A written survey of Bollinger County, Missouri.

**Cape Girardeau, Geological Survey**, Missouri-Illinois-Kentucky, 1:100,000-scale metric topographic map, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1986, 37089-A1-TM-100.

**Paducah, Geological Survey, Kentucky-Illinois-Missouri-Indiana**, 1:250,000-scale metric topographic map, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1987, 37088-A1-TM-250.

**Rolla, Geological Survey, Missouri-Illinois**, 1:250,000-scale metric topographic map, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1989, 37090-A1-TM-250.

**Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission: Future Land Use Plan**, 4 September 1986, exhibit #71.

**Missouri Atlas & Gazetteer**, Yarmouth, Maine. Delorme, 1998.

Houck, Louis. **A History of Missouri: From the Earliest Explorations and Settlements Until The Admission Of The State Into The Union**, 1908 R.R. Donnelly & Sons Company, Chicago. Volume 1.

Jackson, Donald, editor. **Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents 1783-1854**. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1962.

**Bollinger County: 1851-1976, A Bicentennial Commemorative**, Bollinger County Bicentennial Commission, July 1977, pages 29 & 30.

**Plan For Drainage**, The Little River Drainage District, 1907.

**Topographical Maps for the Little River Drainage District**, 1924.

**Index Map Of The Little River Drainage District And Adjacent Territory**, by Isaac A. Smith, Del. Sheet 1, August 1926. Drawing Number 1665, Index 107.32, File K-3.

**Missouri: Official Highway Map 1999-2000**, Missouri Department of Transportation.

**Goodspeeds History of Southeast Missouri**, 1888.

Douglass, Robert Sidney. **History of Southeast Missouri**, 1912.

Houck, Louis **A History of Missouri; From The Earliest Explorations And Settlements Until The Admission Of The State Into The Union**,

R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, Chicago, 1908.

**Bollinger County: 1851-1976 A Bicentennial Commemorative**, Bollinger County Bicentennial Commission, July, 1977.

Shrum, Edison. **The History of Scott County, History: Up To The Year 1880**, Scott County Historical Society.

Jackson, Donald, editor. **Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents 1783-1854**, University of Illinois Press, Urbana. 1962.

**Missouri Atlas & Gazetteer**. Yarmouth, Maine. DeLorme, 1998.

**Indirect Deed Index, Book 1. Book 1, pages 147 & 148**. Recorder of Deeds Office, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri.

**Indirect Deed Index, Book 1. Page 434**. Recorder of Deeds Office, Cape Girardeau, County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri.

**Survey of Township 29, Range 11**, Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, Jenifer Sprigg. September, 1826.

**Survey Map of Township 29, Range 12**. Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, Silas Reed. August 26, 1842.

**Survey of Township 31, Range 11, Sections 26 & 25**, Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. April 25, 1844.

**Survey of Township 30, Range 11**, Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, M. Lewis Clark, Surveyor General. December, 1852.

**Survey of Township 32, Range 11**, Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor M. Lewis Clark, Surveyor General. December, 1852.

**Cape Girardeau County Range and Township Map of 1966**.

**Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission: Future Land Use Plan**, September 4, 1986, exhibit #71.

**River Classifications**, U.S. Government, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 1998.

**Oxford English Dictionary**, Second Edition, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989.

**Plan For Drainage: The Little River Drainage District**, 1907.

**1861 Major Operations of Grant's Command, in Late 1861**.

**1863 Marmaduke's Expedition to Cape Girardeau**.

**1880 Rand, McNally & Company's Indexed Atlas Of The World**.

**1924 Little River Drainage District Topographical Maps**.

**1926 Index Map Of The Little River Drainage District and Adjacent Territory.**  
**1964 Topography Map.** Missouri State Highway Department.

Bollinger County, Missouri:

Personal Interviews.

Indirect to Direct Land Transfers, Recorder of Deeds, Bollinger County  
Courthouse, Marble Hill, Missouri, 63764.

Photographs.

Cape Girardeau County, Missouri:

Personal Interviews.

Indirect to Direct Land Transfers, Recorder of Deeds, Cape Girardeau County  
Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri, 63755.

Surveyor Map, 25 April 1844, Twp 31 & Range 11.

Surveyor Map, 30 December 1852, Twp 32 & Range 11.

Surveyor Map, 24 May 1852, Twp 31 & Range 11.

Surveyor Map, 30 December 1852, Twp 30 & Range 11.

County Range & Township Map, 1966.

Photographs.

Perry County, Missouri:

Personal Interviews.

Indirect to Direct Land Transfers, Recorder of Deeds, Perry County, Missouri,  
63775.

Plat Book, Topographical Maps, Missouri State Highway Department, Division of  
Highway Planning, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Public Roads,  
1967.

Survey Map, 1915, Township 34 Ranges 8 E & 9 E.

Range and Township Map, Zahner & Associates, 1994.

Photographs.

Scott County, Missouri:

Personal Interviews.

Survey Map, 25 August 1842, Township 29 & Range 12.

Photographs.

Stoddard County, Missouri:

Personal Interviews.

Survey Map, 2 September 1826, Township 29 & Range 11.

Photographs.

**Missouri Board On Geographic Names  
Name Issue Worksheet  
26 September 2000**

**NAME ISSUE:** Name evaluation for the "Little Whitewater Creek" vs. "Little Whitewater River."

**PROPOSAL:**

Submitted by: Dr. Frank Nickell, Director, Center For Regional History,  
Southeast Missouri State University, One University Plaza, Cape Girardeau,  
Missouri, 63701.

Received from: Dr. Frank Nickell, Director, Center For Regional History  
Southeast Missouri State University, One University Plaza, Cape  
Girardeau, Missouri, 63701.

**DATE:**

Submitted: 22 August 2000

Received: 23 August 2000

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

**LITTLE WHITEWATER CREEK:**

The headwaters of the "Little Whitewater" are spring-fed or rainwater tributaries located in Township 33 N, Range 8E, near County Road 916 in Bollinger County, Missouri. These water sources merge immediately north of present day Highway 72 approximately 1.6 miles west of Patton Junction, Bollinger County, Missouri. The waterway at this point increases in width to accommodate the seasonal spring run-off with an average depth of approximately 18 inches to two feet. It then travels predominantly southeast to merge with the Whitewater River/ Creek 2.4 miles north of Burfordville, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, Township 31 N, Range 11 E. It is approximately 19.2 miles in length and falls from the headwaters (elevation 1316 feet) to the mouth (elevation 964 feet), a drop of 352 feet.

**GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:**

County: Cape Girardeau and Bollinger.

Township 33 N, Range 8 E to Township 31 N, Range 11 E (mouth).

Communities Involved: North Patton, Patton Junction, Patton and Mayfield, Missouri.

## **GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The headwaters of this watercourse are spring-fed and rainwater tributaries located near County Road 916 in Bollinger County, immediately north of Highway 72. It travels southeast where it converges with the Whitewater River approximately 2.4 miles north of Burfordville, Cape Girardeau County, in Township 31 N and Range 11 E in Cape Girardeau County. It is approximately 19.2 miles in length and falls from the headwaters (elevation 1316 feet) to the mouth (elevation 964 feet) creating a drop of 352 feet.

## **OTHER NOMENCLATURE:**

Also known as Little Whitewater Creek, Little White Water Creek, Whitewater Creek, Little Whitewater, White Water Creek, Little Whitewater River, Little White Water, The Little Whitewater.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The waterway in southeast Missouri commonly referred to as the Little Whitewater Creek has had many name designations. From the territorial period through the Civil War era common usage labeled this as "**Little White Water Creek**" (see enclosed maps). The nomenclature as the "Little White Water Creek" or the "Little Whitewater Creek" has generally been continued to this day with a tendency to refer to the stream as the "Little White Water" or "Little Whitewater" without a creek or river suffix.

Available land records indicate that from the early nineteenth century to the twentieth century this watercourse was identified as "Little White Water Creek." The formation of the state highway system and a land survey system for the region brought non-local surveyors into the area which added to the diversity of terminology for roads, bridges, and waterways. Other factors which contributed to this diversity included the formation of a strong and independent county government system; a rapid population growth between 1910 and 1930; and a substantial number of stable land owners.

At the present time local usage is consistent with "Little Whitewater Creek." Interviews with residents supports the usage of creek. Most interviewees referred to "Whitewater" as one word. This is likely due to the name of the town of Whitewater located south of the mouth of the waterway and the use of one word for the township.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Based upon historical precedent and for purposes of standardizing the nomenclature it is hereby recommended that the most logical designation of this watercourse should be the "**Little Whitewater Creek.**"

**SOURCES:**

See Name Issue Worksheet for Whitewater Creek.

# Whitewater River/Creek Little Whitewater River/Creek

## Documentation of Name Variations Associated With The Bibliography

Bollinger County: 1851-1976 A Bicentennial Commemorative, Bollinger County Bicentennial Commission, July 1977.

"Bollinger County is well drained by **Whitewater** in the northeast, Castor in the southwest, Crooked, Hurricane and Perkins Creeks in the central and southern areas. Swamplands in Bollinger County were drained in the early part of this century by machine-made diversion channels through a plan supervised by the Little River Drainage District."

Cape Girardeau County Range and Township Map of 1966.

This county range and township map still in use, notes, "**Little Whitewater Creek,**" as "**Little Whitewater River.**"

Douglass, Robert Sidney. History of Southeast Missouri, 1912.

"The rest of this district is drained principally by streams flowing to the south, the easternmost of these are Castor and **Whitewater** both of which have their origin in St. Francois county flowing toward the south and uniting to form Little river in New Madrid county."

"In the neighborhood of Allenville, Crooked creek and **Whitewater river** combine and the stream thus formed is called **Whitewater** until it receives the waters of Caney creek and the east Fork after which it takes the name Little river."

Goodspeeds History of Southeast Missouri, 1888. Washington, D.C., The Goodspeed Publishing Company.

"The town of **Whitewater** is situated on the Belmont branch of the Iron Mountain Railroad in Cape Girardeau county."

"Burfordville is on **Whitewater river** near the site of Bollinger's mill."

"**Whitewater township . . .**"

Houck, Louis. A History of Missouri; From The Earliest Explorations And Settlements Until The Admission Of The State Into The Union, 1908

R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, Chicago.

"Any other crossing between west and southwest would have involved his (DeSoto's) army in lagoons and the deep and wide channel of **White**

**river**, which forms a barrier of about one hundred and fifty miles toward the south." (Please note Houck separated the word Whitewater and river.)

Index Map Of The Little River Drainage District And Adjacent Territory, Isaac A. Smith, Del. Sheet 1, August 1926. Drawing Number 1665, Index 107.32, File K-3.

Topographical map of ditch numbers, county, range and townships involved in the Little River Drainage District. This map identifies the waterway as the **"White Water River,"** three separate words. **Oddly, the eastern bifurcation of the waterway is identified as the main channel. Two years earlier, in 1924, the western bifurcation is (and to date) identified as the main channel serves as the border between Scott and Stoddard counties.**

Indirect Deed Index, Book 1, pages 147 & 148. Recorder of Deeds Office, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri.

Joseph Rogers sells to Henry Bollinger, the son of Philip, 640 acres of land on the ". . . **west fork of the White Water** German Township . . ."  
14 August 1821.

Indirect Deed Index, Book 1. Page 434. Recorder of Deeds Office, Cape Girardeau, County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri.

Certificate No. 441 states Joseph Baker purchased 138 acres of land in Township 32, Range 1 in **1824**. This property is noted on a plot map which indicates that the **Whitewater River** dissects the land.

Jackson, Donald, editor. Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents 1783-1854, University of Illinois Press, Urbana 1962.

". . . there are no settlement's beyond the St. Francois river and I think it would be good policy to prohibit any settlement being made beyond it; the country between this river and **White river** which lies West of it, is said to be a delightful tract of land, and there appears to be no Indian claim to it . . ."  
As stated by Merriwether Lewis.

Major Operations Of Grant's Command, in Late 1861.

Waterway labeled as **"White Water River"** and **"White Water."**

Marmaduke's Expedition to Cape Girardeau, April 17 - May 2, 1863, Civil War Map.

Labeled **"White Water River,"** three separate words. Suffix designated as "river".

Missouri Atlas & Gazetteer. Yarmouth, Maine. DeLorme, 1998.

This topographical map of the state of Missouri utilizes  
**Whitewater River** and the **Little Whitewater Creek**.

Missouri: Official Highway Map 1999-2000. Missouri Department of Transportation.

The main waterway is labeled, "**Whitewater River.**"

Oxford English Dictionary, The, Second Edition, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

Creek: "As part of a river or river-system. An inlet or short arm of a river, such as runs up into the widened mouth of a ditch or small stream, or fills any short ravine or cutting that joins the river. A branch of a main river, a tributary river; a rivulet, brook, small stream, or run."

Brook: "A small stream, rivulet."

River: "A copious stream of water flowing in a channel towards the sea, a lake, or another stream."

Copious: "Furnished plentifully with anything existing in abundance; plentiful."

Plan For Drainage: The Little River Drainage District, 1907.

A written proposal for the Little River Drainage Project. This document utilizes the name, "**Whitewater River.**"

Plat Book of Perry County, Missouri. Published for Perry County, Missouri, 1964. Missouri State Highway Department.

This book compiled by the Missouri Highway Department identifies all public roads and homeowners in Perry county. The waterway is identified as "**Whitewater River.**"

River Classifications, U.S. Government, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 1998.

River classification systems and identification from the Bureau of Land Management. The easiest classification of a *river* per the International River Classification System states ". . . **waves small; passages clear; no serious obstacles.**"

Shrum, Edison. The History of Scott County, Missouri: Up To The Year 1880. Scott County Historical Society.

"When the early settlers selected these sites for their homes, this ridge was one of the few high and dry areas in the southern half of what was to become Scott County. On the west, the ridge was bordered by Lake St. Mary; and beyond it there was a great

swamp across which meandered Caney Creek, the east Fork of **Whitewater River**, the **Whitewater** itself, and below the junction of the latter two, what sometimes was called James River."

Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission: Future Land Use Plan, September 4, 1986, exhibit #71.

This future land use proposal dated 1986 identifies the watercourse in sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 south of present day Allenville, Missouri, as the **"Whitewater River."**

Survey of Township 29, Range 11, Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, Jenifer Sprigg. September, 1826.

Township 29 is the most southwestern part of Cape Girardeau County and is bordered on the south by Stoddard, on the west by Bollinger County. The waterway is clearly labeled as **"Part of the White Water."**

Survey Map of Township 29, Range 12. Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, Silas Reed. August 26, 1842.

This township adjoins Range 11 on the eastern side. To the south it borders present day Scott County. This map clearly shows the original "White Water" which divides into the **"East Branch of the White Water"** and the **"West Branch of the White Water."**

Survey of Township 31, Range 11, Sections 26 & 25, Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. April 25, 1844.

This survey map is of the waterway directly below the Burfordville Bridge and Bollinger Mill known today as the Whitewater River. This survey map done by Silas Reed labels the waterway as **"White Water Creek."**

Survey of Township 30, Range 11, Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri. Surveyor, M. Lewis Clark, Surveyor General, December, 1852.

This survey map indicates that along the eastern portion of this township the waterway is labeled **" White Water Creek."**

Survey of Township 32, Range 11, Mapping Division, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse, Jackson, Missouri, 63755. Surveyor, M. Lewis Clark, Surveyor General. December, 1852.

The larger waterway is clearly labeled **" White Water Creek."** The smaller branch is labeled **"Little White Water Creek."** In both circumstances the word

"White" and "Water" are separate.

Survey of Townships 34 N, Ranges 8-9 E, Mapping Division, Perry County Courthouse, Perryville, Missouri, 63775, 1915.

This survey map clearly identifies the waterway in question, but it is not labeled.

Survey No. 1459, Township 34 N, Range 9 E, Perry County, Missouri.  
Recorder of Deeds Office, Perry County Courthouse, Perryville, Missouri, 63775. Thomas H. Layton, County Surveyor, November 26, 1886.

This survey map contains original field notes and scale drawing, but the waterway is not identified.

Survey No. 1488, Township 34 N, Range 8 E, Perry County, Missouri.  
Recorder of Deeds Office, Perry County Courthouse, Perryville, Missouri, 63775. Thomas H. Layton, County Surveyor, dated February 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>, 1888.

This survey map contains original field notes and scale drawing. The waterway is clearly identified as "**White Water Creek**," three separate words.

Survey No. 1495, Township 34 N, Range 9 E, Perry County, Missouri.  
Recorder of Deeds Office, Perry County Courthouse, Perryville, Missouri, 63775. Thomas H. Layton, County Surveyor, May 23, 1888.

This survey map contains original field notes and scale drawing. It clearly identifies the waterway as "**White Water Creek**," three separate words.

Survey Field Notes of Present Bollinger County, Missouri, Volume 217, page 79, 80, and 81. February, 1818.

Page 79 of the field survey notes identifies the waterway as a "**brook**."

Page 80 of the field survey notes identifies the waterway as "**W. Water**."

Page 81 of the field survey notes identifies the waterway as "**White Water**," two separate words (no clarification of creek vs. river).

1880 Rand, McNally & Company's Indexed Atlas Of The World, page 708, Missouri.

Page 708, map of Missouri, clearly identifies the community as "**White Water**" and the waterway in question as "**White Water River**."

1924 Little River Drainage District Topographical Maps.

A series of topographical maps labeling natural waterways, drainage ditches, their location and relevant bridges. The term "**Whitewater River**" is used throughout the collection. The western bifurcation of the Whitewater is noted as the main waterway and the eastern labeled as the "**Eastern Branch of the**

**Whitewater River."**

1964 Topography Map, Missouri State Highway Department, Division of Highway Planning, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Public Roads.

This document uses the name **"White Water River."** Three separate words.

1994 Perry County, Missouri Range and Township Map. Zahner & Associates.  
Waterway not identified by name.



# THE LITTLE RIVER DRAINAGE DISTRICT

FLOOD CONTROL & DRAINAGE  
SINCE — 1907

November 3, 2000

Mrs. Diane Steele, Regional History Center  
Southeast Missouri State University  
One University Plaza  
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

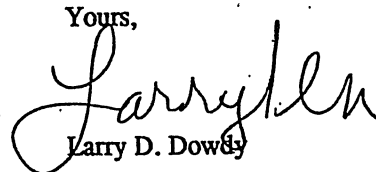
Dear Mrs. Steele:

As a follow up to our meeting on October 31, 2000 at the District's office in Cape Girardeau, Missouri I have the following information for you:

1. The District constructed a Diversion Channel in the early 1900's diverting Castor River and other arteries at which one (1) time provided water to lower parts of Southeast Missouri commonly called the Bootheel. The headwaters of the Castor River is in the proximity of Fredericktown, Missouri. The Castor River was diverted by the Diversion Channel, an artificial channel constructed by this District in the early 1900's near a small town known as Greenbriar, Missouri.
2. The Diversion Channel, which is correctly known as the Headwater Diversion Channel of the Castor River, has been in place since the construction of the District in the early 1900's. Its headwaters are considered to be at Greenbriar, Missouri.
3. There are traces of Castor River below the Diversion Channel still in place which enters our Ditch No. 1 in Stoddard County, Missouri approximately two (2) miles North of Highway 60 near Morehouse, Missouri. Below the Ditch No. 1 intersection traces of the Castor River are virtually obliterated and difficult to find in most instances (farming improvements have filled it up and did away with the channel).
4. Below the Headwater Diversion Channel Castor River is fed only by the runoff from the surrounding farmland and some isolated hill areas with low velocities. Above the Headwater Diversion Channel the river is still stream fed by upland runoff from the hill areas and has continuous flow and much higher velocity.
5. In the upland portion of Castor River gravel deposits can be found and other similar features consistent with rivers, creeks, branches, and streams having runoff from like terrain. Below the Diversion Channel you will find no gravel deposits in the channel but heavy silting problems due to the runoff and erosion from the farmlands which drain into the river.

I trust the foregoing is what you desired and if you need further information please do not hesitate to call upon me.

Yours,

  
Larry D. Dowdy

LDD:ln

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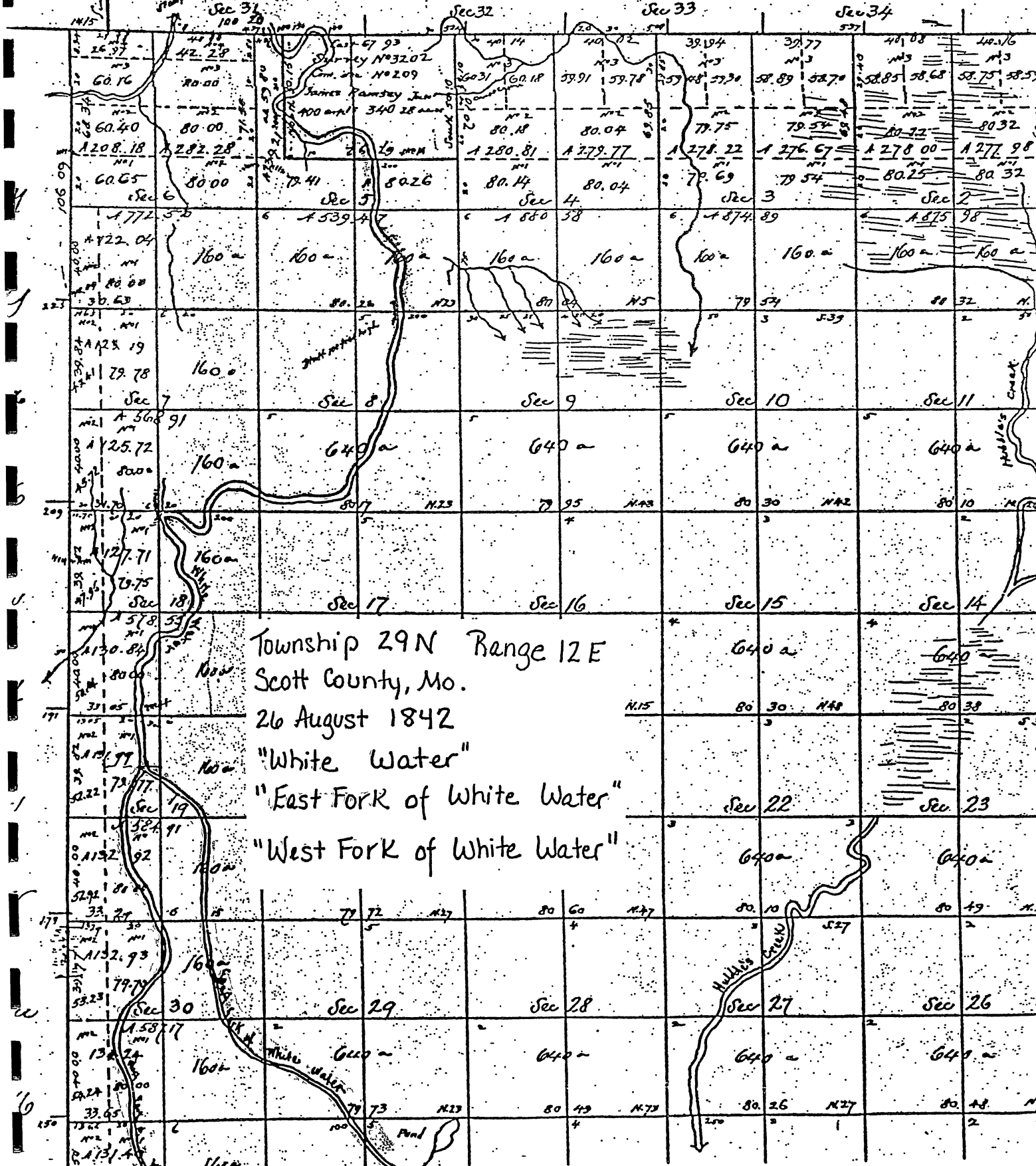
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Blytheville, AR



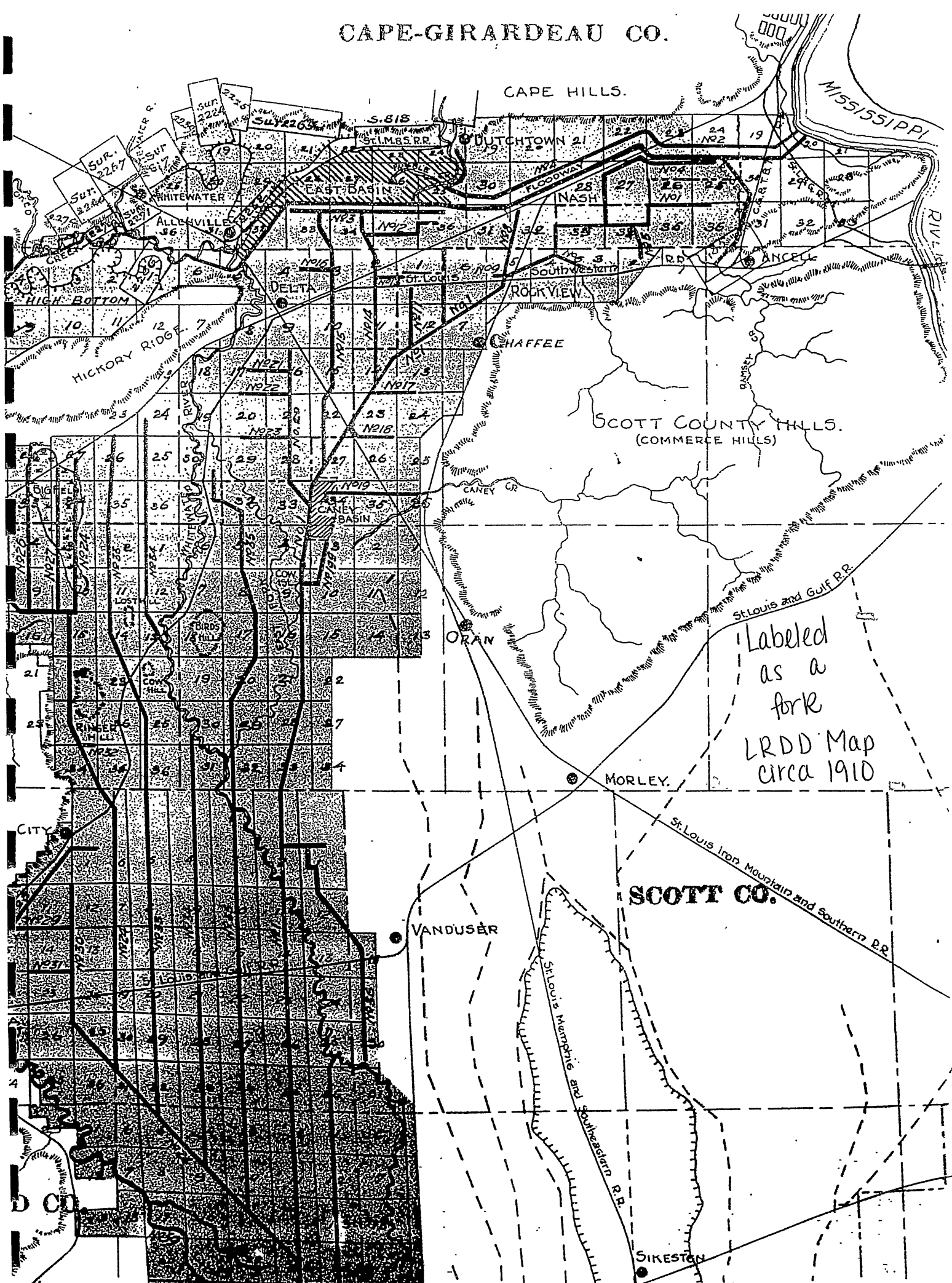
Red.  
Lm

A B C D E



Township 29N Range 12E  
Scott County, Mo.  
26 August 1842  
"White Water"  
"East Fork of White Water"  
"West Fork of White Water"

# CAPE-GIRARDEAU CO.



CAPE HILLS.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

SCOTT COUNTY HILLS.  
(COMMERCE HILLS.)

Labeled  
as a  
fork  
LRDD Map  
circa 1910

SCOTT CO.

VANDUSER

MORLEY.

SIKESTON

CITY

D CO.



The bifurcation of the Whitewater Creek into the East Fork and West Fork. The Whitewater Creek enters at the 9 o'clock position and splits. The West Fork travels straight across towards the three o'clock position. The East Fork travels due south to the 6 o'clock position and under the bridge where this photograph was taken.

3. Mrs. Sandy Hulshof is a resident at County Road 302, Oran, Missouri, 63771. She resides very near present day Randles, Missouri, although her mail service is through Oran. She and her husband purchased this residence 18 months ago. Sandy was born in 1966. She stated her abstract titled the waterway "**WHITEWATER RIVER DITCH.**" She denies any problems with the waterway flooding in the 18 months they have resided there.

This editor in attempting to discern whether this was a "river" or a "creek" took off her shoes and socks and **waded it.** It was more of a marsh or slew and only approximately 3 feet deep as the editor is 5'7". This portion of the waterway was the western side.



The Western Branch of the  
"Whitewater Ditch." East  
County Road 274 on the  
Scott + Cape Girardeau County  
borders, Missouri.  
Depth @ 3 feet. ☺

4. This is hwy 266 from Perkins, Missouri heading east towards County Road 264. The below photograph of the bridge goes over the diverted "**Eastern Channel of the Whitewater**" according to David Ford (born 1961). David shared he had been employed on this particular farm for several years. He also stated the original "**Eastern Channel of the Whitewater**" was diverted with the drainage projects and in a cluster of trees immediately west of this photo of the bridge. The waterway is not labeled although several people I spoke to at a nearby gas station commonly referred to it as the **Eastern Whitewater**.



Bridge on County Road 272  
heading towards JJ  
eastern branch - not labeled



Southern Branch of Eastern  
Whitewater heading towards J.J.



Northern Branch of Eastern  
Whitewater on E. hwy 272  
facing J.J. not labeled



The East Fork of the Whitewater Creek 0.5 miles north  
of County Road 265.



The East Fork of the Whitewater Creek.



The southern view of the east fork of the Whitewater Creek as taken from County Road 265.

The residence of Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Baker. He has resided here for ten years and has always referred to it as "the Ditch." He did not know it was part of the Whitewater system.



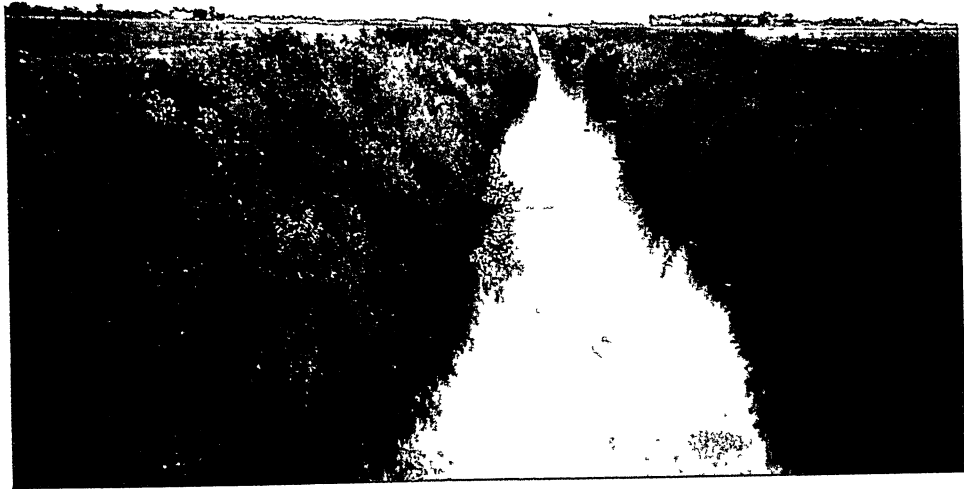
The northern view of the east fork of the Whitewater Creek on County Road 265 (old State Highway JJ). The waterway is not labeled on either side of the bridge.



Northern view of the old East Fork of the Whitewater Creek, now diverted by drainage ditches. County Road 266.



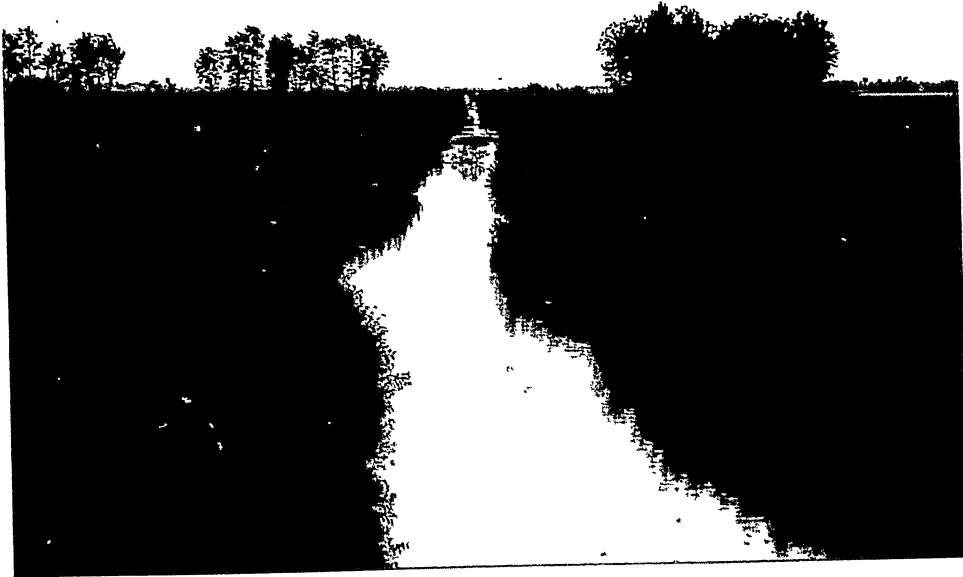
Southern view of the old East Fork of the Whitewater Creek. Taken from County Road 266.



The northern view of the diversion ditch on County Road 266. This ditch diverts much of the water which would normally be in the East Fork of the Whitewater Creek.



The southern view of the diversion ditch on County Road 266. Notice it is a popular site for local fisherman and small children on hot days.



Northern view of a diversion channel on County Road 266 which carries water away from the East Fork of the Whitewater.



Southern view of a diversion channel on County Road 266 which carries water away from the East Fork of the Whitewater.

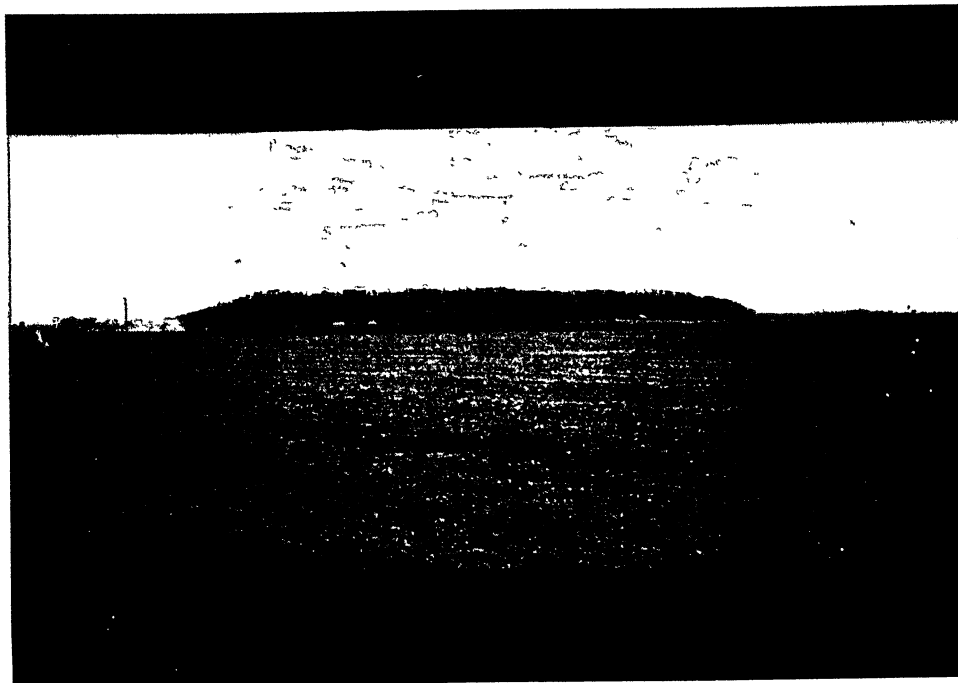


County Road 268. Here the East Fork of the Whitewater Creek has merged with an area drainage ditch. Northern view, above, and southern view, below.





Southern view of the East Fork of the Whitewater Creek.  
Country Road 277.



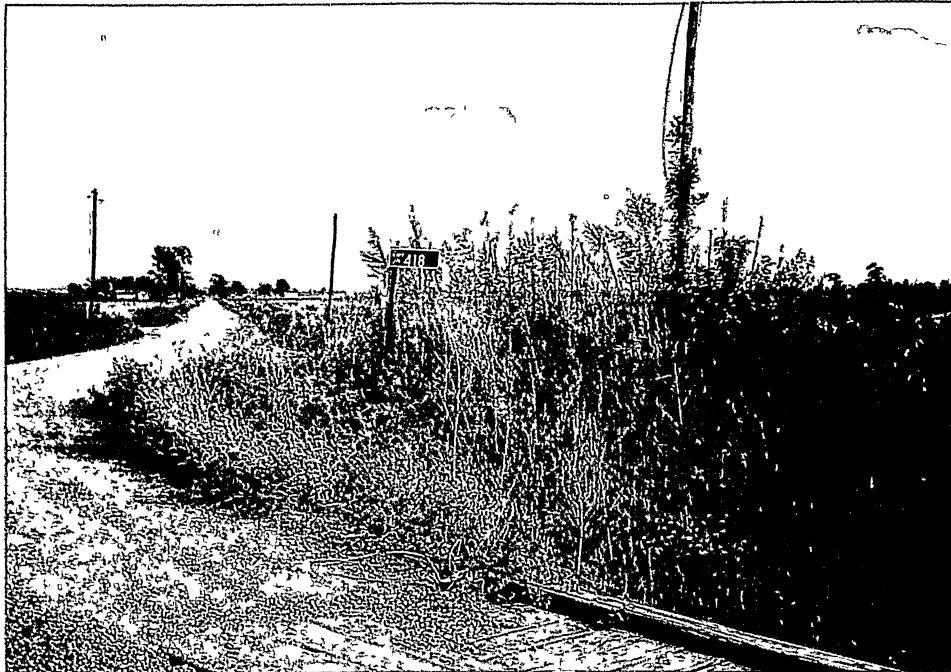
This is a panoramic view of the locale of "Bird's Hill."  
This mound separates widest channels of the East and  
West Fork of the Whitewater Creek.



Southern view of old channel of the East Fork of the Whitewater Creek near County Road 418. Observe the wooden bridge.



Farther south of the above view of the old East Fork of the Whitewater Creek.



Unmarked East Fork of the Whitewater Creek and a wooden bridge. Intersects with County Road 418.



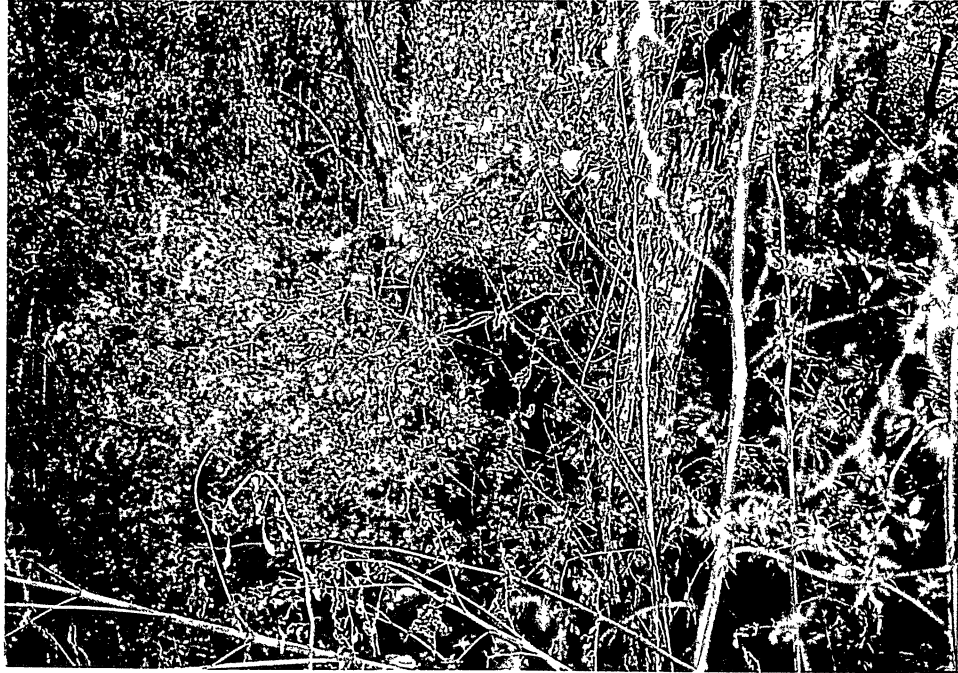
Northern view of East Fork of the Whitewater Creek.  
Unmarked gravel road and wooden bridge.



Northern view of the East Fork of the Whitewater Creek taken from County Road 420.



Southern view of the East Fork of the Whitewater Creek taken from County Road 420.



The channel of the East Whitewater Creek in October  
2000 near the headwaters of the Little River.



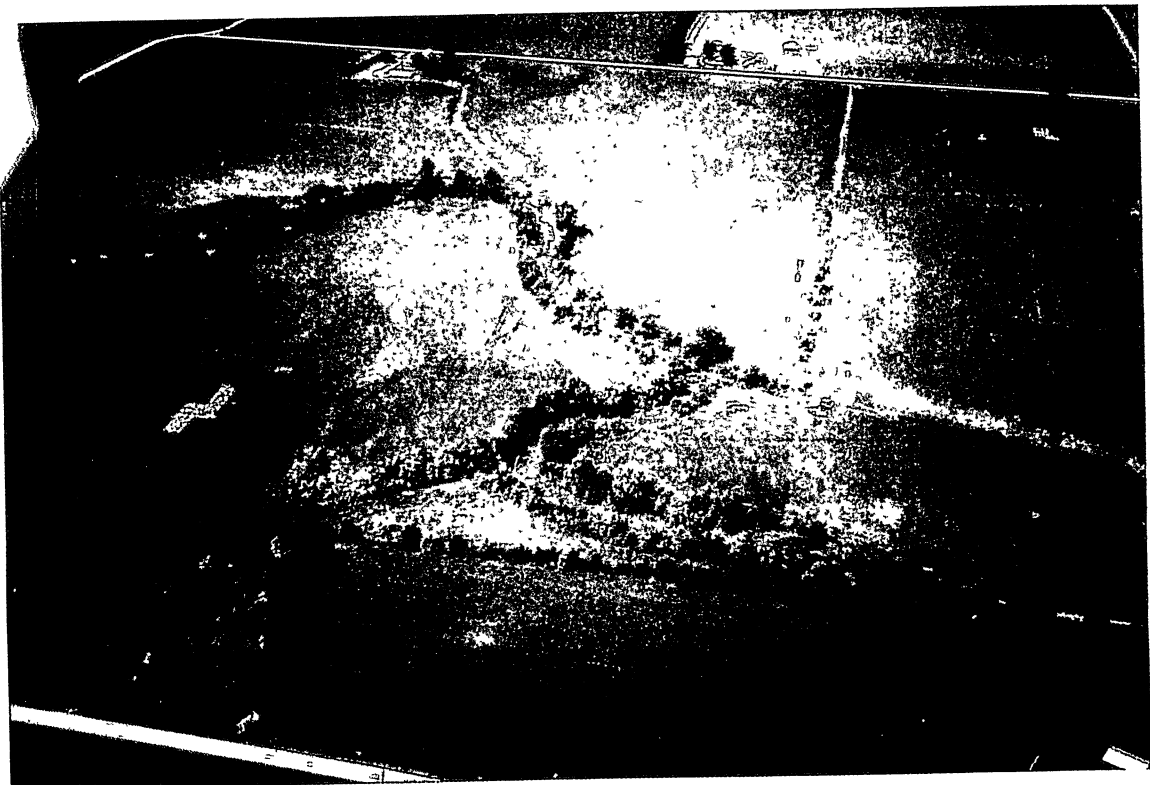


Aerial photographs of the West Fork of the Whitewater Creek.  
Here it snakes along State Highway "P" and a railroad track.  
Crowley's Ridge is distinguishable in the lower photo.





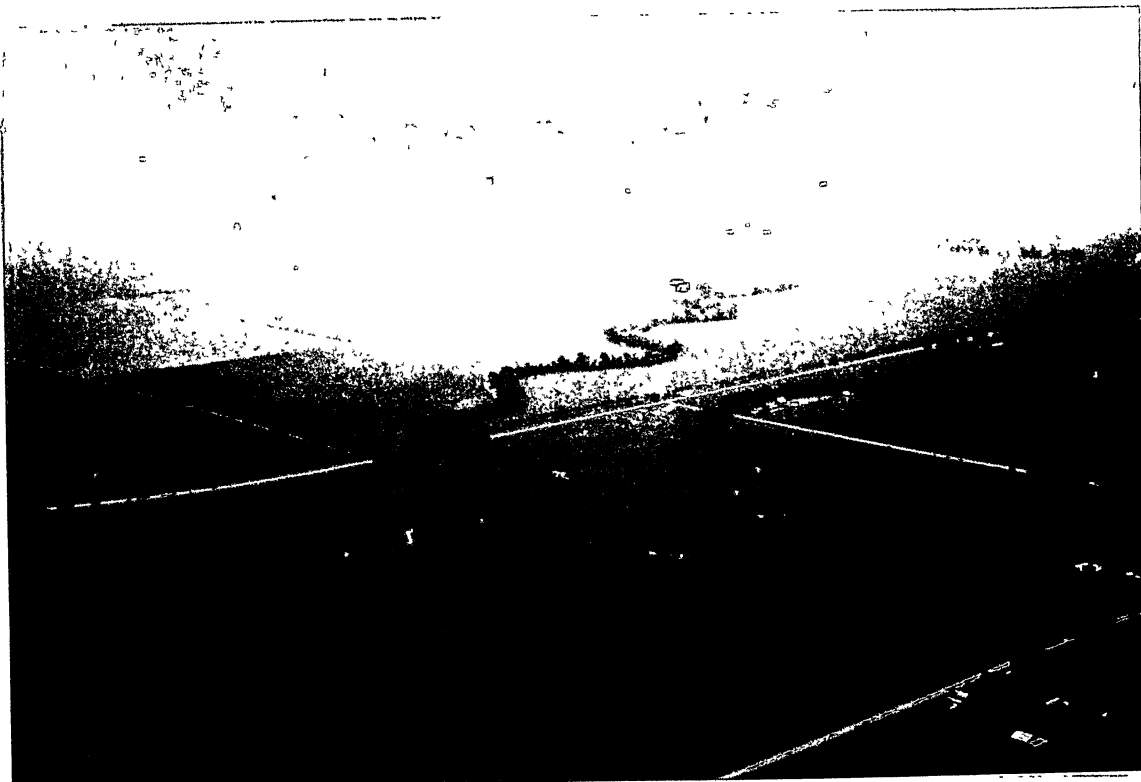
Aerial photographs of the West Fork of the Whitewater Creek.  
Here it snakes along State Highway "P" and a railroad track.





Above, aerial photographs of the West Fork of the Whitewater Creek. Here it snakes along State Highway "P" and a railroad track. The lower photograph is of the East Fork of the Whitewater Creek as it is dissected multiple times by diversion ditches.





Eastern Channel and Western Channel of the Whitewater River/Creek as they converge to form the Little River south of the Diversion Channel.



Eastern Channel of the Whitewater River/Creek as it empties into a Little River Drainage District ditch.



The convergence of the East and West Forks of the  
Whitewater Creek which create the headwaters of  
the Little River.

